

WHITE HOUSE

The President met today with his senior advisors to consider the United States response to this morning's vicious attack on both the Marines and the French soldiers. One thing is clear: those who sponsor these outrages believe that they can intimidate the government of Lebanon, its people, and their friends in the international community. They are wrong. The United States will not be discouraged from a course which is both just and consistent with our national interest of peace and stability in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East. We are confident that Lebanon's other friends will also stand beside the brave people of Lebanon and the government which is seeking to establish its sovereignty and independence free of external control.

We will spare no effort to reduce the vulnerability of our troops along with those of France, Italy, and Great Britain. But our support for the objectives they are there to serve is not weakened. Our commitment to the search for national unity and stability in Lebanon is not lessened. We have encouraged

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President Gemayel to persevere in his courageous decision to broaden the political base and composition of his government, and we will assure that he can do so without surrendering to those who reject political solutions and seek to impose their will by violent means.

Drafted: LWG:DLMack

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Cleared: Ambassador Habib

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